



# The Communicator

An interagency newsletter for Greater Boston Federal employees

10 Causeway Street, Room 178, Boston, MA 02222

617/565-6769

<http://www.boston.feb.gov>

**August 2002**

## A Note from the Chair



Executive Director Kim Ainsworth and I attended the annual national Federal Executive Board / Federal Executive Association conference hosted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management in Washington, D.C. last month. Each year, this conference educates us about the latest national priorities and initiatives, helps us share experiences and learn from our FEB / FEA counterparts from across the country and provides endless networking opportunities with chief Administration officials and other government leaders.

Once again, much of the focus was on the "human capital opportunity" facing the US government. In particular, the statistics indicating that 50% of the Federal workforce is eligible to retire in the next 5 years. I was pleased to be a panelist for a discussion featuring, among others, OPM's Acting Director for Employment Service Dick Whitford and the Partnership for Public Service's CEO Max Strier. I provided a formal briefing on our plans to aggressively reach out to high school students in our area over the next school year.

As mentioned last month, we recently engaged in a program to help us educate "Generation Y" about the opportunities potentially available to them via US government employment. Our program has taken shape this summer and I am happy to announce that we will be inviting local high school guidance counselors to a Federal Career Forum on October 8, 2002. The Forum will feature briefings by several top

## Diane P. LeBlanc

agency leaders and host displays from a variety of government agencies. See inside for details. Contact the GBFEB if you are interested in participating.

During the conference, we heard from several OMB appointees about the President's Management Agenda and their strategy for implementation. Three areas continually stressed by President Bush's team include achieving a government that is citizen-centered, results-driven and market-based. Locally, I've asked White House Initiatives Chair Brian Cresta, HHS' Regional Director, to keep us informed and engaged in the dialogue.

As we gear up for the next GBFEB year, please continue to provide us with your feedback about the GBFEB and its programs and initiatives. We look forward to serving the Federal community at large during the year.

### WELCOME

US Air Force *Lieutenant General William Looney, III* assumed command of Hanscom Air Force Base in May.

US Army *Major General Dennis J. Laich* assumed command of the 94<sup>th</sup> Regional Support Command at Devens in May.

US Army *Brigadier General Craig Peterson* was installed as Director of Homeland Operations at Natick's Soldier and Biological Chemical Command in July.

US Army *Colonel Thomas Koning* assumed command of the US Army Corps of Engineers' New England District in July.

## FEEA News

The upcoming school year will be here before we know it. The GBFEB would like to make you aware of a loan program offered by the Federal Employees Education and Assistance (FEEA). It is entitled Capital for Knowledge and is open to all Federal employees.

The Capital for Knowledge loan program offers numerous financing options and services and includes:

The Higher Education Loan: Loans for undergraduate and graduate students attending public and private post secondary schools

The Junior (K-12) loan: Financing for private schools, grades K-12

Technical/professional Loan: Financing for students attending technical, professional or vocational programs

Consolidation Loan: Consolidate all education-related debt into one loan with no origination fees

The Scholarship Search: A free online program designed to help search the more than 150,000 scholarship and grant offerings quickly and easily.

Federal Loans: Stafford and PLUS loans available through Wells Fargo Education Financial Services

FEEA loan specialists are available Monday-Friday from 8AM-9PM and Saturday 12PM-4PM at 1-888-651-5626. Apply at any time. There are no pre-approval deadlines.

### NEW PARKING OPTION FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

GSA is negotiating with Central Parking at the Government Center Parking Garage to create secured parking for Federal and State Government Owned Vehicles. Proposed security enhancements include designated parking, card key elevator access, electric gate, CCTV, canine patrols and armed guard service.

If your agency currently uses the garage at One Congress Street to house your GOV's or if members of the Federal family regularly buy monthly passes there, please contact Mike Strobel at 617-565-7250.

## GBFEB CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE PUBLIC SERVICE

The GBFEB recently launched an initiative aimed at "reaching out" to local high school students to promote public service as a career. Although many local Federal agencies have partnerships with local colleges and universities and recruit from within their ranks, GBFEB Chair Diane LeBlanc sees this initiative as filling a void. It will help us to reach students at an even younger age. Our goal is to get students thinking about public service early and to help them understand the benefits of the Federal government as an employer as well as types of occupations and positions commonly available. Our Board of Directors has made a personal commitment to the project and will actively visit local schools during the coming school year.

With the leadership of Mr. Steve Young from the US Customs Service, we've created a brochure outlining some important information for local students. To review a copy, visit our web site at [www.boston.feb.gov](http://www.boston.feb.gov).

## GBFEB GUIDANCE COUNSELOR SEMINAR

To that end, the GBFEB will host an information forum for high school guidance counselors on Tuesday, October 8, 2002 9am – 12pm in the O'Neill Federal Building Auditorium. We will invite counselors from across Massachusetts and plan to showcase Federal agencies and careers and to brief them about the wonderful opportunities that exist for their students. About a dozen agencies have already signed on to participate.

Please contact the GBFEB at 617/565-6769 if you are interested in participating in this unique event.

## **PREMIER LODGING NEWS**

GSA's Federal Premier Lodging Program has awarded contracts in 5 new locations effective July 15, 2002. Lodging per diem rates have also been changed and effective July 15, 2002. The new locations include: Huntsville, Alabama; Jacksonville/Mayport, Florida; Savannah, Georgia; Biloxi/Gulfport, Mississippi; Charleston/Berkeley South Carolina

The rates were published in the Federal Register on July 19, 2002 and are currently reflected on the Domestic per diem rate website at: <http://policyworks.gov/perdiem>

GSA is finalizing language to be published in the Federal register that will mandate the Federal travelers give FPLP properties first preference when traveling. Look here for complete details in coming months.

*This is the third in a series of articles that the Federal Executive Board will publish regarding special offers by local hotel and conference locations. This should not be construed as exclusive endorsement.*

## **STURBRIDGE HOST**

Located on Cedar Lake, the *Sturbridge Host* offers 233 guests deluxe accommodations with extra amenities in every season. Some of our rooms feature a fireplace or a lake view; others enjoy a view of our 9-hole miniature golf course. In addition, the hotel is home to over 35,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, including a large Exhibit Hall, two ballrooms, and several other breakout room facilities.

The hotel has been the site of several State and Federal Government meetings, many of whom have enjoyed the low government per diem rates for Worcester County.

Please contact Rhonda Lapham, Director of Sales, to plan your next meeting. (508) 347-7393, [www.sturbridgehosthotel.com](http://www.sturbridgehosthotel.com); [restes@fine-hotels.com](mailto:restes@fine-hotels.com); and also located on Comm-pass.

**FAST FACT:** The Sturbridge Host participated in our Public Service Recognition Week activities this year by providing a weekend stay for the free Federal employee raffle.

## **"Chalk One Up" is back!**

"Sidewalk Sam" is an infamous Boston folk artist who was asked by the City of Boston to get thousands of people who commute into work each day to show off their spirit. The *Chalk One Up Festival* has grown to be the largest cultural festival in Boston, after First Night. Over 3,000 "artists" chalk while over 165,000 pedestrians watch. Lawyers, bankers, accountants, government employees all come out to draw on the sidewalk. This year, *Chalk One Up* will take place at City Hall Plaza, Thursday, August 22, 11am to 3pm.

Absolutely no talent is necessary! Lots of employees draw a big yellow happy face, a pink heart or a doodle. Simple cartoons get the biggest applause. To find out more information including how you can participate, visit [www.sidewalksam.com](http://www.sidewalksam.com).

## **SAVE THE DATE**

EPA New England will sponsor the 8th Annual Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Vendor Fair on Tuesday, October 29 at the Worcester Centrum. Last year a dozen agencies participated and attended special sessions, including those on "green" purchasing. Contact Robert Guillemain, Environmental Protection Specialist, at 617-918-1814 / [guillemain.robert@epa.gov](mailto:guillemain.robert@epa.gov) for more information.

## **ANNUAL MED WEEK CELEBRATION**

The US Department of Commerce / Minority Business Development Agency's annual *Minority Enterprise Development* week event will take place on Monday, September 9, 2002 at Anthony's Pier 4 in Boston, 9am - 4:30pm. The program will include a morning briefing, an awards luncheon and a trade show. The cost to attend is \$50. Federal agencies, prime and subcontractors, Federal grantees, state and local governments and other commercial entities are invited to exhibit at the trade show free of charge.

For more complete information, please contact RK Schwartz at 617/565-6850 or email [rkswartz@mbda.gov](mailto:rkswartz@mbda.gov)

## KUDOS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) (formerly the Health Care Financing Administration) has been selected as one of sixteen "companies" in Massachusetts to receive an Exemplary Employer Award for 2002 for their "exemplary record in employing and retaining people with disabilities, and in exceeding the 'reasonable accommodation' requirements under the state and Federal laws." Governor Jane Swift will present the Award during an October ceremony sponsored by the Governor's Commission on Employment of People with Disabilities. The event is being held in October in recognition of Disability Awareness Month.

## LEARN ABOUT THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Federal Employee Assistance Program has provided the Federal community with consultation, counseling and training services since 1974. A part of the Office of Work/Life Programs, Office of Personnel Management, they serve 27 agencies and their employees throughout greater New England. The Federal EAP is a self-sustaining program of the Federal government, with an understanding of the unique issues facing the Federal employee and agencies. They provide comprehensive services that include short term counseling, resource referral, organizational development, management consultation, supervisory training and workplace consultation, and training services that include customized seminars on a broad range of personal wellness and organizational issues.

If you are not one of the agencies currently served by the FEAP, they invite you to consider joining their consortium. Contact Director Catherine Weisbrod at 617/565-6512 or 800/869-8867 or [cweisbro@opm.gov](mailto:cweisbro@opm.gov) for more complete information.

## LONG TERM CARE BRIEFINGS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The Greater Boston Federal Executive Board is pleased to offer a unique opportunity for Federal employees to learn about the new Federal Long Term Care insurance program.

We will be hosting Account Representatives from LTC PARTNERS, the subsidiary of John Hancock charged with the implementation of the FEDERAL LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE PROGRAM, for 3 sessions on Thursday, August 29. Representatives will provide the latest information on the program and take questions and answers.

All sessions are identical, free of charge and open to all Federal employees. Please RSVP to [shirley.furr@gsa.gov](mailto:shirley.furr@gsa.gov) because space is limited.

SESSION #1: 9 - 10:30 a.m. JFK  
Federal Building, Conference Center C  
Room 275C

SESSION #2 1-2:30 p.m. Moakley  
Federal Courthouse, Jury Assembly Room (2  
photo ids required for entrance)

SESSION #3 3-4:30 p.m. O'Neill Federal  
Building Room 335

For more complete information on the long term program, visit <http://www.ltcfeds.com/>

## **FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARDS CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF SERVICE**

From FPMI's FedNews OnLine

Office of Personnel Management Director Kay Coles James sent a strong message of praise to the nation's Federal Executive Boards (FEB) at their recent annual conference in Washington, D.C. She praised the FEB community as "key frontline soldiers in the war on terrorism. We could not have anticipated how often we would turn to them during the past year." OPM is the agency responsible for monitoring and coordinating FEB activities.

President George W. Bush recognized the Boards for their four decades of service, sending his best wishes, and thanking FEB members for their "hard work in making the federal government more citizen-centered, results-oriented and market-based."

"Too often, people don't realize that 90 percent of Federal employees live and work outside of Washington," said OPM Deputy Director Dan Blair during his address to the conference. "It is these men and women, with the help of Federal Executive Boards, who transform Washington policy into meaningful action that serves Americans everywhere."

Michael Byrne, senior director for response and recovery at the Office of Homeland Security, acknowledged the critical communications role of FEBs on matters affecting homeland security and human resource management.

Though often serving as a communications tool between the White House and field employees, and

as an important vehicle for getting program input from the field back to Washington, FEBs in recent years have been effective representatives for federal employees and their families needing relief from normal workplace procedures following floods and other natural disasters. The terrorist attacks in September brought unusual challenges to government, and Blair acknowledged the critical role the FEBs in New York and Newark played in getting the New York City federal community "back up and running."

Federal Executive Boards were created by Executive Order in 1961 to provide a forum for the exchange of information between Washington and field offices about programs, management strategies and administrative challenges. They also help communicate and strengthen the understanding and support of management initiatives, as well as becoming involved in decisions Washington makes that affect their service areas.

### **FEB's RECOGNIZED**

Archivist of the United States John Carlin helped recognize FEBs on their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary by presenting each with a plaque of the original 1961 Kennedy Executive Order establishing FEBs. OPM Deputy Director Dan Blair presented the plaques to each Executive Director at the annual conference and noted that FEBs have played an important role in the Federal community for four decades.





CFC 2002 is here! Under the leadership of Dr. Richard John, Director of the Volpe National

Transportation Systems Center, the campaign will officially kick off on September 24 with a goal of raising more than \$2.1 million for local, national and international charities. Contact the GBFEB for more information on your CFC Executive, campaign totals and more.

Want to learn more about the Massachusetts Bay CFC? Contact 617/348-6228.

### SAVE THE DATES

for these special events sponsored by the Combined Federal Campaign

K's for Caring Fun Run and Walk  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2002  
5:30pm start at the Lee Pool  
Charles River Esplanade

2002 CAMPAIGN KICKOFF  
SEPTEMBER 24, 2002  
11 AM

Fore the Community Golf  
Tournament  
OCTOBER 18, 2002  
9AM shotgun start  
Sandy Burr Golf Club  
Wayland, MA

Contact: 617/348-6228 for details and registration!

### IRISH LEADERS TO RETURN TO BOSTON

In September 2002, forty middle managers from the Irish government, who have been identified as Leaders for Tomorrow, will arrive in Boston for a six-week developmental assignment. They come from the business sector in Northern Ireland as well as the government sectors in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The governments of Ireland and Northern Ireland fund this unique cross-border initiative.

The program's objectives are to:

- Enhance leadership skills
- Enable public and private sectors to exchange knowledge and experiences
- Encourage networking and benchmarking
- Develop professional relationships

Two weeks will be spent studying at the Kennedy School of Government. The remaining four weeks will be spent observing leadership in an organization similar to where they are employed in Ireland. Local Federal Agencies across Greater Boston will be hosting "leaders" for these developmental assignments from September 29 – October 30, 2002.

This initiative grew out of the Irish peace process and helps impartial observers study leadership in local government agencies.

Mr. Alan McKelvey serves as the program coordinator. Now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, the GBFEB is proud to partner with this international initiative. Contact Mr. McKelvey for more information [alan.mckelvey@mckelveytraining.com](mailto:alan.mckelvey@mckelveytraining.com)

Contact the GBFEB for more complete information on how to participate.



Clip and Save on Rolodex

Greater Boston Federal Executive Board  
T.P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building  
10 Causeway Street, Suite 178  
Boston, MA 02222  
(617) 565-6769 Phone  
617/565-8178 Fax  
kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov

The Greater Boston Federal Executive Board publishes "THE COMMUNICATOR" monthly as a cost-effective tool for communicating events and issues of importance to the local Federal community at-large.

If you have news of interest to the Federal community, please contact the FEB at 617/565-6769 or fax your news to 617/565-8178 / email [kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov](mailto:kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov)

Please feel free to copy this newsletter and distribute to your employees. Copies are also available on the GBFEB web site at <http://www.boston.feb.gov>

Greater Boston Federal Executive Board  
Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building  
10 Causeway Street, Suite 178  
**Boston, MA 02222**  
**FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS ONLY**